

REMARKS

By the foregoing Amendment, Claims 1, 17, 18, 20, 33 have been amended, and Claims 3, 4, 19, 23 and 34 have been cancelled. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter has been added, and that the amendment raises no new issues requiring further consideration and/or search. Favorable consideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-6, 8, 13, 15-26, 28, 29 and 31-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) on the grounds of obviousness from Hillsman et al. in view of Lange et al., as detailed in the Office Action of February 7, 2003. Claim 1 has been amended to recite "a shape memory collar attached over said distal end of said optical fiber" and "a distal sheath formed of heat shrink material connected to said distal end of said optical fiber and extending over a portion of said shape memory collar." Claim 20 has been amended similarly to recite "attaching a shape memory collar over said distal end of said optical fiber" and "attaching a distal sheath formed of heat shrink material over said distal end of said optical fiber, said distal sheath extending over a portion of said shape memory collar." The Examiner referred to the marker 28 of Hillsman et al. as teaching a shape memory collar. However, the marker 28 is only disclosed in Hillsman et al. at column 4, lines 54-55 as a marker band that can be made of a radiopaque material such as platinum-iridium. It is respectfully submitted that Hillsman et al. does not teach, disclose or suggest a shape memory collar. It is further respectfully submitted that Lange et al. also does not teach, disclose or suggest a shape memory collar.

The Examiner also referred to the jacket 26 of Hillsman et al. as teaching a distal sheath. While Fig. 2A of Hillsman et al. shows a jacket 26 extending over a portion of a marker band 28, it is respectfully submitted that Hillsman et al. does not teach, disclose or suggest a distal sheath formed of heat shrink material connected to the distal end of an optical fiber and extending over a portion of a shape memory collar. It is further respectfully submitted that Lange et al. also does not teach, disclose or suggest a distal sheath formed of heat shrink material connected to the distal end of an optical fiber and extending over a portion of a shape memory collar. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 13, 15-18, 20-22, 25-26, 28, 29 and 31-33 are novel and inventive over Hillsman et al. in view of Lange et al., whether taken individually or together, and that the rejection on the grounds of obviousness as it pertains to Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 13, 15-18, 20-22, 25-26, 28, 29 and 31-33 over Hillsman et al. in view of Lange et al. should be withdrawn.

Claims 7 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) on the grounds of obviousness from Hillsman et al. in view of Lange et al. and further in view of Drasner et al., which was cited as teaching a connection hub attached to a shaft by an adhesive, as detailed in the Office Action of February 7, 2003. However, it is respectfully submitted that Drasner et al. also does not teach, disclose or suggest a shape memory collar, or a distal sheath formed of heat shrink material connected to the distal end of an optical fiber and extending over a portion of a shape memory collar. It is therefore respectfully submitted that Claims 7 and 27 are also novel and inventive over Hillsman et al., Lange et al., and Drasner et al., and that the rejection applied to Claims 7 and 27 on the grounds

of obviousness from Hillsman et al. in view of Lange et al. and further in view of Drasner et al. should be withdrawn.

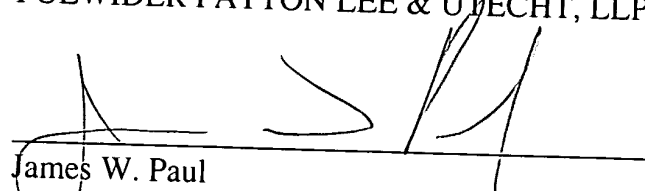
Claims 1, 12-14, 31 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) on the grounds of obviousness from Amplatz et al., which was cited as disclosing a tapered reinforcing tube 26, in view of Lange et al., as detailed in the Office Action of February 7, 2003. However, it is respectfully submitted that Amplatz et al. also does not teach, disclose or suggest a shape memory collar, or a distal sheath formed of heat shrink material connected to the distal end of an optical fiber and extending over a portion of a shape memory collar. It is respectfully submitted that Amplatz et al. and Lange et al., whether taken individually or together, do not teach, disclose or suggest a shape memory collar, or a distal sheath formed of heat shrink material connected to the distal end of an optical fiber and extending over a portion of a shape memory collar, that Claims 1, 12-14, 31 and 35 are novel and inventive over Amplatz et al. and Lange et al., and that the rejection of Claims 1, 12-14, 31 and 35 on the grounds of obviousness from Amplatz et al. in view of Lange et al. should be withdrawn.

In light of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application should now be in condition for allowance, and an early favorable action in this regard is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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